

THE CONCEPT OF DENTAL HOME



To be successful in preventing dental disease in kids, interventions must begin within the first year of life. Pediatricians are well positioned to initiate preventive oral health care by providing early assessment of risk, anticipatory guidance, and timely referral to the Pediatric Dentist to **ESTABLISH THE CONCEPT OF 'DENTAL HOME' FOR KIDS**. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Dental Association, and the American Association of Public Health Dentistry recommend that *infants be scheduled for an initial oral examination within 6 months of age or with the eruption of the first primary tooth and by no later than 12 months of age (the first birthday)*.

The Pediatric community promotes the concept of a **'MEDICAL HOME' FOR KIDS** to improve families' care utilization, seeking appropriate and preventive services with optimal compliance to recommendations. The concept of the dental home is based on this model and is intended to improve access to oral care. *A dental home is the ongoing relationship between the dentist and the patient, inclusive of all aspects of oral health care delivered in a comprehensive, continuously accessible, coordinated, and family-centered way.*

AN ESTABLISHED DENTAL HOME FOR A CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. An Accurate *Risk Assessment For Oral Diseases* And Conditions.
2. An *Individualized Preventive Dental Health Program* Based On Risk Assessment.
3. *Anticipatory Guidance* About Growth And Development Issues (Eg, Maxillofacial And Dentoalveolar Development).
4. A Plan For *Emergency Dental Trauma* Management.
5. Information Regarding *Care Of Teeth And Oral Soft Tissues*.
6. *Nutrition And Dietary Counseling* For Optimal Oral Health.
7. *Comprehensive Oral Health Care* In Accordance With Accepted Guidelines And Periodicity Schedules For Maintaining An Optimal Oral Health.